

CHRIST'S SECOND COMING

Why Is He Coming? How Is He Coming? When Is He Coming?

By W. D. COLE, WINCHESTER, KENTUCKY

The Bible Answers To Some of Your Questions On This Subject

Q.—Is Christ coming back again to our earth?

A.—Christ Himself said, "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14: 2, 3, R.V.).

"Behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give each man as his work shall be" (Rev. 22:12, R.V.).

Q.—Is Christ coming back personally, visibly, bodily, as He went away?

A.—"This same Jesus which is taken from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11).

"Behold he cometh with the clouds; and every eye shall see him" (Rev. 1:7).

Q.—What is one purpose of Christ's second coming?

A.—"He shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired of all them that believe" (II Thess. 1:10).

Q.—Will true Christians be glorified also with Christ when He comes again?

A.—Your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, which is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory" (Col. 3: 3, 4).

"Father, I desire that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold (share) my glory which thou hast given me" (John 17:24, R.V.).

Q.—What miraculous events will occur when Christ comes again?

A.—(The resurrection of dead saints and the translation of living saints.) "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also that are fallen asleep in Jesus will God bring with him . . . For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven, with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first" (I Thess. 4:14, 16, R.V.).

"Then we that are alive, that are left (on the earth when Christ comes), shall together with them be caught up (with resurrected saints) in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words" (I Thess. 4:17, 18, R.V.).

"Behold I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep (die), but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump . . . the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we (the living) shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality" (I Cor. 15: 51-53).

Q.—How are the new bodies of the saints described who are resurrected and changed when Christ comes again?

A.—"Some will say, How are the dead raised? And with what manner of bodies do they come? . . . God giveth it a body even as it pleaseth him . . . There are celestial bodies and bodies terrestrial, but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another . . . So also in the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory" (I Cor. 15: 42-44, R.V.).

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Mr. Thompson Did Not Like Jews

Mr. Thompson was a good Christian. But he did not like the Jews, and no effort to convert Jews to Christianity won either favor or support from him. One night Mr. Thompson dreamed that he was dead. It was a satisfaction to him as he sped upward to think that he would be missed below. He caught some of the kind things said about him as a citizen, a husband and a father, a church member and all the rest, and he felt he was getting his due.

So he entered heaven. It was lovely beyond all imagining. But as time passed he grew uneasy. Where were his Sunday school heroes—Joseph and David and Elijah and Peter and John? Where was his favorite apostle, Paul? Nay, where was Jesus himself? It annoyed Mr. Thompson to realize that he had never yet had even one glimpse of Jesus. He confided his annoyance to an angel.

"Oh, dear me!" quoth the angel, "we have placed you in the very part of heaven we thought would be most to your mind. All the gentlemen you have mentioned are Jews, you know. Jesus himself was a Jew, wasn't He? Well, you never liked Jews, and in this part of heaven you will never be troubled with the sight of a single one of them!"

Whereupon Mr. Thompson awoke, not sorry (we may be sure) to have the chance of revising some of his unholy prejudices and looking with different eyes upon the people of whom after the flesh Christ came, and for whom, as for Mr. Thompson himself, He died.

A General Assembly heard this story from the lips of the Rev. E. J. E. It got home. Gowned dignitaries around the table were visibly affected. Conscience set to work in any number of ministerial breasts. Ladies in the gallery wept inwardly, as they recalled their objections to more than a mere pittance being given to the Women's Jewish Mission.

Let every one who has read it now, even according to our imperfect recollection of it, repeat it soon to someone else: and — who knows? — there may be fewer Mr. Thompsons henceforth.

— Daniel Rose.
(From Biblical Research Monthly.)

"Tested By Fire"

By DR. JOE HENRY HANKINS

Pastor, First Baptist Church, Little Rock, Arkansas

(Preached at the First Baptist Church, Little Rock, Arkansas, Sunday morning, April 20, 1941, and stenographically reported.)

Text: First Corinthians 3:11-15: "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire."

There are four things in that text that I want to call special attention to this morning: First, the foundation; second, the building on that foundation; third, the testing of the fire; fourth, the fate of the two builders.

There are two lines of truth set out in this passage of Scripture that run throughout the whole of the New Testament. One of them is salvation by grace through faith alone in the atoning sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ. The other is service after salvation and rewards for that service. Many people get confused about those two teachings. Those who do not read the Scriptures discriminatingly will get much confused because many times the two seem to contradict each other. The scriptures plainly teach that "by grace are you saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God," and again: "To him that worketh

not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." And just as plainly God's Word teaches: "Every man will be rewarded according to his own labor."

There are no contradictions in the two. They are two wonderful doctrines of the New Testament, and two glorious lines of truth. The one is that when I believe in the Lord Jesus Christ for the salvation of my soul then and there the sin question is settled once and for all — then and there I stand justified before God; that in that instant I become as much a child of God as I shall be after I have been in heaven a million years. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God," saith the Scripture. Again the Scripture says, "He that believeth on the Son hath—" (present tense, already has it) "—everlasting life." That is settled forever, and out of the gratitude of a saved heart there flows a life of service. But the Lord is so gracious in His dealing with His people that He says to us after we are saved that not one service that we render, not even the smallest shall be overlooked by our Lord — that even a "cup of cold water given in the name of a disciple" will not go unrewarded. How glorious it is and how gracious the Lord is to take note of everything a child of God does in the name of and for the glory of Christ and is not willing that anyone should go unrewarded for the least service rendered. God even teaches that after we are saved the prayers of the saints are preserved in heaven. When Jesus is pictured in the Revelation as mounting the throne of His glory the very first thing that is seen on that glorious day is an angel with a golden censer filled with incense presenting it before the throne of His glory. And God says that incense that is going up to the throne of Christ as a sweet

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Beauty and the Beast

By REV. SAM MORRIS

The Voice of Temperance Broadcast

I want to talk to you now on the subject, "Beauty and the Beast," or the story of a beautiful, sweet, Christian woman who played the fool by marrying a rich old drinking reprobate. It is the story of Nabal and Abigail. Here is the way Samuel wrote in the 25th chapter and first and second verses about that couple. Listen to it:

"There was a man in Maon, whose possessions were in Carmel; and the man was very great, and he had three thousand sheep, and a thousand goats . . .

"Now the name of the man was Nabal; and the name of his wife was Abigail: and she was a woman of good understanding, and of a beautiful countenance but the man was churlish and evil in his doings; and he was of the house of Caleb." — I Samuel 25:2, 3.

Now here is the further story of how that union ended and how that family came to an end. Listen to it:

"And Abigail came to Nabal; and, behold, he held a feast in his house, like the feast of a king; and Nabal's heart was merry within him, for he was very drunken: wherefore she told him nothing, less or more, until the morning light.

"But it came to pass in the morning, when the wine was

gone out of Nabal, and his wife had told him these things, that his heart died within him, and he became a stone.

"And it came to pass about ten days after, that the Lord smote Nabal, and he died."

— I Samuel 25:36-38.

Thus we have set out before us these two characters, this woman and her husband. She was a beauty and he was a beast. She was no old disheveled, twisted, toothless, thankless, treacherous hag who had

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On to Pentecost

By ANNIE JOHNSON FLINT

Some of us stay at the cross,
Some of us wait at the tomb,
Quickened and raised with Christ
Yet lingering still in the gloom.
Some of us bide at the Passover Feast
With Pentecost all unknown,
The triumphs of grace in the heavenly place
That our Lord has made our own.

If the Christ who died had stopped at the cross,
His work had been incomplete;
If the Christ who was buried had stayed in the tomb,
He had only known defeat.
But the way of the cross never stops at the cross,
And the way of the tomb leads on
To victorious grace in the heavenly place,
Where the risen Lord has gone.

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"TESTED BY FIRE"

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savor unto Him is the prayers of the saints. One of the writers says that even the tears God's people shed are bottled up and kept as a remembrance before God. Our heavenly Father doesn't overlook anything, not even the least of services — not even a cup of cold water.

I. The Foundation

The thing of first importance and first concern is the foundation. After the foundation is laid then comes the building. That foundation is Jesus Christ, and certainly that is laid in salvation, for the minute I believe God's Word teaches that Jesus Christ comes into my heart to live. Jesus, in other words, is the foundation that God put underneath my life — the "Rock of Ages" is, as it were, slipped in underneath my life, and I begin the day I am saved to build on that foundation. And the building being erected is the life I am living and the service I am rendering.

I said the thing of first importance is the foundation. Many people are trying to build without that foundation, and they are building upon the sand. Whatever foundation they are trying to build upon other than Jesus Christ is building upon the sand, and when the testing time comes their building will not stand. Some are building upon the foundation of church membership, morality and good works. Just yesterday afternoon I was in a home where a little girl is sick. As I prayed the mother sat on the side of the bed. After the prayer she said, "Brother Hankins, since my little girl has been so sick God has been dealing with me and has shown me my sin, and I have resolved that, as soon as my girl is able I am going to join the church and live right." I said, "My dear sister, the first thing you need is Jesus. Have you been saved?" She answered, "I don't think I have — my mother thinks I have, but I am not certain about it. A preacher (and she called his name) was here last night, and he prayed for my little girl, and he told me that if I would come on and join the church and live right the rest would come around all right." I said, "My good woman, don't let anybody sidetrack you into anybody's church." Then I said, "I want you when this little girl is able for you to leave her to come to my study so we can have time to go into the plan of salvation, and give me an hour or so to sit down with you and teach you God's way of salvation in Jesus Christ, and put your feet on the Rock of Ages — then you can settle the matter of the church."

Oh, so many people are trying to build on the foundation of church membership, morality and living right. "Other foundations can no man lay," that will stand the test except Jesus Christ. "On Christ the solid rock I stand, all other ground is sinking sand." Just as certainly as you live there is only one foundation. Men think they can do right and treat their fellow-man right and by living a beautiful, useful life, being charitable, kind and a good citizen, etc., that they can in that way build a building that will stand. But listen, when the testing time comes the one thing that is going to determine whether the building stands or not is the foundation.

Two men each built a house, the Lord said. One built upon the sand, and "The rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it." The other man built his house upon a rock, the rains descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not." Why? Not because the one was so much better

than the other. Maybe you couldn't look at them and tell much difference between them, but the secret is its foundation. Anchor your soul, place your hope in Jesus Christ and let God Almighty lay the foundation deep in the cross and in the shed blood of Jesus Christ, and it will stand the test of the ages. When the world is on fire and when the heavens are rolled together like a scroll, if you are standing on the rock, Christ Jesus, you have nothing to fear. But don't let anybody deceive you into trying to build upon any other foundation.

II. The Building

After the foundation is laid we begin to build on that foundation. I tell you when you think of the foundation, Jesus Christ, it is worthy of the right kind of building. That foundation merits a real building. Men don't dig down to solid rock to build a shanty. Men don't lay foundations like the one they have laid for our new temple of worship across the street except for a real building. I have stood and watched the excavation and asked the architect again and again when I saw the dimensions of those foundations — solid reinforced concrete — why such thick walls and why such deep digging. Each time he would say, "Preacher, this is going to be a great building. This isn't going to be a little shanty on this corner. We are building to stand here until Jesus comes back again." I see those foundations laid, big and broad and deep: I am expecting to see a building rise on it in proportion to the foundation that is laid. You do not lay that kind of foundation to build a shanty. After that magnificent foundation of Jesus Christ is laid in their lives, many Christians proceed to build out of wood, hay and stubble. God lays the foundation: I do the building on it. The building I erect is my work — my life, my service.

Some build of gold, silver and precious stones. Those precious stones are not diamonds and rubies — not what we call precious stones. The word means magnificent building stones — pure granite, solid marble, beautiful, enduring, lasting building stones. Gold and silver are the decorations. God admonishes His children to build out of materials that will weather the storms and be not only beautiful but useful, on Christ the foundation.

First, I think this Scripture pictures to us a man that is building out of both kinds of material. Here is a Christian that builds a while out of gold, silver, and mighty stones. The next thing you know he puts in some wood, hay and stubble. Today he is all for Christ. Tomorrow he is playing with the devil and his crowd. Today he is standing like a giant for Christ; tomorrow he is a quivering coward. Like Simon Peter: "Lord, though all the world forsake you, I will stay by you." But Jesus answered, "I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day before that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me." Today he makes good resolutions, but tomorrow he has forgotten all about them. Today he builds with "gold, silver, precious stones," tomorrow with "wood, hay, stubble."

Recently a man about thirty-seven years of age sat in my home and told me this story: "I was saved back yonder about the age of thirteen, and, Brother Hankins, all during those years the call of God kept coming to my heart and I made God all sorts of promises, but then I wouldn't do a thing about it. One day my wife lay at the point of death. I prayed that God would spare her life and made God all sorts of promises if He would spare her life and God raised her up, but I didn't even make an attempt to keep my promise. And here's what happened: God came in to chastise me for my unfaithfulness in not keeping my vow and took our baby. Still I failed to keep my promise. Again God's hand came in and now my wife is resting in the cemetery. Now I am ready to keep my covenant with God."

Oh, friend, why is it that you will make a vow and tomorrow you forget about it and make no attempt to keep your vows to God — build of gold and silver a little while, then put in hay, wood and stubble; run well for a while — faithful a while then drift away; start tithing because we know God has commanded it, and after a little while we quit. We start out

right and everything goes along fine until we forget and drop by the wayside. We build out of gold and silver for a while, then turn around and put in wood, hay and stubble.

What is wood, hay and stubble? They are those things that will not endure — the inconsistencies in our Christian lives — worldliness, carelessness, indifference. Yes, more than that they are those things we do for our own glory. And, beloved, if we will sound our own hearts out this morning, we will find that all of us are guilty of doing a lot of things for our own glory. You can get people to do many things when somebody is looking on or when there's honor, credit or position in it that you couldn't get them to do just for the glory of God when nobody will see or notice.

Things that we do to maintain our respectability — these are "wood, hay and stubble." Do you do your giving to maintain your self-respect? Do you give your money to maintain your respectability in your church, or do you give your money for the glory of God and try to follow the plan of God and let not your right hand know what your left hand doeth"? Will you give more when a public collection is being taken because your fellow-man knows, or will you do your dead level best when no one but God knows and do it for His glory? Have you said to yourself, "Well, if so-and-so will give, I will give so much." I have heard men say, "If you will raise ten thousand dollars, I will give the last thousand." Did you ever hear anybody talk like that? Listen, all of that is for some purpose that does not honor Christ. For if you are doing it for His glory, you will say between you and God, "If I ought to give a thousand dollars I will do it whether anybody else gives a penny or not. If I ought to bear witness for Christ, I will bear that testimony whether the world knows anything about it or not. If I ought to render service for Christ in the most insignificant place — maybe it is only that of a door-keeper where nobody knows about it and nobody praises me for it — if it is where the Lord wants me, I will do it not to be seen of men, nor for self praise."

There are many teachers teaching a Sunday school class because he or she enjoys the honor that goes with it — to be seen of men or for self-gratification. That is wood, hay and stubble. For the Lord said, "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not love, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not love, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and the motive back of it is not love for Christ; is not a desire for His glory — if there's any other motive back of it, then I am nothing. It profits me absolutely nothing. Jesus said some men love to give alms in public to be seen of men — they will stand on the street corners and make long prayers to be heard of men. They have their reward and that is the last of it. That is wood, hay, and stubble."

The gold, silver and precious stones are those services that I render to my Lord regardless of what anybody else does — maybe I will be persecuted for doing it, or may have to suffer rather than be praised, but I am doing it for the Lord Jesus Christ and for His glory. Thank God, He knows why I am doing it. He knows the purpose in my heart.

III. The Testing By Fire

Beloved, one day my building is going to have to stand the test of fire, the fire of God's judgment. What does it mean? It means inspection day. When I was in military service, I had the hardest-boiled captain that I ever saw. How we dreaded inspection day! Before that day we would work until late at night to clean our guns, brush and press our uniforms, and polish our shoes. Everything had to be just right because old Captain Jackson was coming to inspect us the next morning. When he came he would look us over from head to foot, and if there was the least speck anywhere, he would find it. Then he would take our

gun, pull the bolt back and turn it toward the sun — there had better not be a speck in it anywhere. It was inspection day!

One day the white light of eternity is going to be turned upon my life. One day the searchlight of Almighty God is going to be turned upon the building that I have built, and only that will remain that will stand the test of judgment — stand the test of fire. All earthly things will disappear. All earthly glory, honor and praise will vanish away, and all that will be standing is that which will stand the test of fire.

When I was a child, early one morning my father awoke the children by coming in and saying, "Get up children! The house is on fire." We rushed out in our night clothes, the ground frozen as hard as a brick, and there we stood watching our house go through the fire — watched it burn down, saw the roof fall in and the walls tumble in and watched it burn clear to the foundation. Dad stood there wiping the tears from his eyes and looking at the little shivering family group, and said, "All we have in the world is gone." My mother looked over to my dad and said, "No, dad, you are wrong, we still have God and our little ones."

I have thought about that building many times. There was a lifetime of effort, sacrifice and saving on the part of mother and father, burned to ashes with nothing but a foundation left. I have said in my heart many times, "Lord, that is going to be the way with many saved lives when they go through the testing by fire. There won't be a thing left but the foundation. 'If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.' But he whose works shall abide and go through the testing of the fire will stand there for the glory of Christ throughout the countless ages of eternity and 'he shall receive a reward.'"

Oh, friend, that builder who builds so his work will abide and stand the fire of God, stand the searching judgment, stand the inspection of God's white searchlight, can stand with his head erect and unashamed in the presence of God and know that his life has not been in vain. You may run after the world and gain its praise, honor and glory until his name is on the lips of all mankind, but when you stand before God, earthly glory is as ashes.

Men may pile up their gold and silver and build their stately mansions, but when they stand before God, material things do not mean a thing except as you have invested them for Jesus Christ. All the good investments you have made in fine business enterprise will fade and melt away. The only treasures that will endure — the only investments that shall abide are those you have made for the glory of Jesus Christ. The poet was right when he said:

"Carve your name high o'er the shifting sand
Where the steadfast rocks defy decay.
All you can hold in your cold dead hand
Is what you have given away.
Build your pyramids skyward and stand
Gazed at by millions, cultured, they say,
But all you can hold in your cold dead hand
Is what you have given away.
Count your wide conquests by sea and land,
Heap the gold, hoard as you may,
All you can hold in your cold dead hand
Is what you have given away."

May I add a little more to it. It is what you have given to the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ. Every hour of your life that has been given and spent for selfish glory; every service that has been for self praise and to be seen of men will melt and vanish in the fire. Only that unselfish service rendered through love and gratitude to Christ — only those sacrifices that have been made for His glory when no praise of men was ever sought or ever received shall abide. No investment that I have ever made shall amount to anything except as I have invested in the cause of my Lord. These shall pay dividends throughout the ages. "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal. But lay up for

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no thought of her personal appearance or her family's welfare. She was intelligent, a woman of wisdom, charitable, sympathetic, industrious, forgiving, tender and very beautiful. She was a wife of whom any man might justly be proud and to whom he could introduce his friends without embarrassment.

Now everything that Abigail was, Nabal was not. Her husband was exactly her opposite. He was a churl. That means he was sour, sordid, ungracious, rough, base, and slovenly in his appearance and manners. He was a stingy, niggardly, selfish man through whose veins flowed no milk of human kindness and in whose heart bloomed no rose of charity to cast its fragrance out upon mankind. He was arrogant, brutal, and overbearing. He ruled his employees with gruff, cutting words and dominated his home without love or kindness. He was evil in his ways. He was vile in his language. He was in short a brute. There was nothing of refinement, culture, or sociability about him. And what is worst of all he was a debauching drunkard. Often when he should have been attending to business, he was sodden with drunkenness and his wife had to see after the affairs.

Thus you have the contrast of these two people, this woman and her husband, Abigail and Nabal. Two people more unlike could not be found. And yet they were husband and wife; they were joined in bonds supposed to be broken only by death.

What do you suppose ever lead those people to get married anyway? How could such a beautiful, refined, cultured, sweet Christian woman as Abigail ever have consented to tie herself up for life with such a gruff and uncouth old bear as was Nabal? There are three things suggested in this rec-

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yourselves treasures in heaven."

IV. The Fate of the Two Builders

Look at those two builders just a second. One of them comes empty-handed — saved, yet like being pulled from the fire. Friends, I don't want to meet my Lord like that. The picture is God, because of the foundation, reaching into the fire, dragging him through the fire, for the foundation's sake. And there he stands ashamed before God — no trophy to lay at Jesus' feet. While the redeemed who have overcome are casting their crowns at Jesus' feet, crowning Him Lord of all, he hasn't a thing, not a trophy to lay down.

Here comes the other builder who has built out of gold, silver and precious stones. His ship is coming in loaded down to the water line. He has been building for God. Maybe he didn't have much of this world's goods, but he has been building for God. He comes in with full mast, loaded down with trophies to lay at Jesus' feet. The other crowd will come in on broken pieces of the ship. Their cargo is gone, the building consumed. "He shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire." While to the other crowd God says, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

I didn't used to think much about the end of the journey, but somehow when I think that His coming is so near I feel that I may be caught up to meet Him any moment, or the dangers are so great, that even though He doesn't come soon, my life may be snuffed out and shall go to be with Him. In these trying days I have been thinking more than ever of His coming. I am going to meet my Lord pretty soon either as He comes in glory or as I finish my course, and I want to have something to lay down at His feet — something on that foundation that will stand the test of fire. For "every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire, and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work shall abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire."

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Beauty and the Beast

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ord that I think led to their marriage.

1. In the first place this man came of a very fine family. He had a good name. He was a descendant of Caleb. He was of historic blue blood. Caleb, you will remember, was one of the twelve spies who fearlessly urged the people not to turn back at Kadesh-Barnea. He was a prince of Judah and inherited Hebron. Any girl could feel herself fortunate to marry into such a family and become linked up with such an historic name as that of Caleb.

2. In the next place Nabal was a great man. That is he was influential. Because he was a descendant of this proud old family of Caleb he was looked up to in the community as a civic leader. To him were offered responsibilities of leadership in the clubs and organizations. He held positions on the official boards and he was one of the great men of the community.

3. In the third place he was rich. He owned three thousand sheep, a thousand goats and had other wealthy holdings in the community so that he could entertain his friends royally and command influential financial movements. Money talks and he had it to talk. Wealth wields a power that all recognize.

Thus you have what in my judgment constitutes the three chief reasons why such a woman as Abigail would marry such a man as Nabal. By marrying him she married into a good family, she married into the influential set of the community and she married into wealth so that she had no need to worry about keeping the wolf away from the door. Many a woman has been influenced by these three things altogether too much in the choosing of her life companion. I think it is a fine thing for a woman to marry into a good family, to marry a man of influence in the community, and to marry a man with property and wealth if she can get those things and at the same time get love and character. But what a tragic mistake when a sweet, beautiful Christian woman marries a man of this kind and he turns out to be a churl, an evil doer, a drunkard, and an old stingy tightwad that does not in the least appreciate her. But that is what has happened a lot of times. I know personally of several just such tragedies. That is what happened here. She was a beauty; he was a beast. Her marriage vow became a curse, her matrimonial bonds, chains of slavery, her trousseau a living shroud and her fair dreams of a sweet home with happy little children was wrecked upon the breakers of a reality that she was tied up to a heavy, sodden, brutal old beast of a man.

It was a tragic blunder. It was a blunder that can never be fully corrected or adjusted. She could not revert the situation and go back to what it was before she became his wife. There are some mistakes and failures that we can correct, but not so in the matter of marriage. If I make a mistake in business I can often overcome that mistake. If I prove a failure as a merchant I can change to the work of a farmer; if I fail as a school teacher I can prepare and become a lawyer; if I fail as a pastor I can go into the evangelistic work. There are many shifts and changes that can be made in life that will correct bad failures and mistakes but the man who is a failure as a husband and a father is the worst failure in the world. To fail in that sphere is to fail miserably and irretrievably. To blunder at the marriage altar is to struggle as a cripple through the rest of life.

No doubt Abigail sat at home many times and wondered where her husband was and whom he was with. No doubt Abigail saw him stagger in at the front door of the home many times and turned away, sick with disgust as she said to herself, "That is what I got by marrying a drunkard." No doubt many nights she looked upon his sodden face, smelled his foul breath, gazed into his bleary eyes, heard his senseless prattle and rued the day she walked to the marriage altar with him. What if he did come from a grand old family like Caleb? What if he did have high standing in the community? It is standing at home that counts with

a wife and mother. Many a man has stood high in the community, in business, in society, in civic affairs and had no standing with his own wife and children because they know him for what he is, a churl and an evil man. What if he did have wealth? Sheep and goats and possessions of rock and land can't take the place of love and devotion and gentleness. Money can't take the place of character, a sweet disposition, a gentle devotion to a wife.

A beautiful and sweet, refined woman yoked to a regular old bear. The yoke was galling and the burden was heavy. The nights were long and the days were filled with anguish, remorse, dread, and regret. To live with him was an embarrassment and to separate was an embarrassment. To stay with him was shameful and to leave him was more shameful.

This man had a proud old family name. He had position and was called great in the community. He had wealth and watched his flocks graze on many hillsides. He had a house where he stayed at night but he did not have a home. This woman had a lovely disposition. She had a charming face. She had fine clothes, was spoken of in the community as the wife of Mr. Nabal, that influential descendant of old Caleb. But neither of these folks had a home. Their house was a prison. Its four walls cooped their regrets. It provided no surcease at close of the day. They were poor people.

"For the peace that is the sweetest isn't born of minted gold, And the joy that lasts the longest and still lingers when we're old

Is no dim and distant pleasure — it is not tomorrow's prize, It is not the end of toiling, of the rainbow of our sighs. It is every day within us — all the rest is hippodrome — And the soul that is the gladdest is the soul that builds a home.

"They are fools who build for glory! They are fools who pin their hopes On the come and go of battles or some vessel's slender ropes. They shall sicken and shall wither and shall never peace attain Who believe that real contentment only men victorious gain. For the only happy toilers under earth's majestic dome Are the ones who find their glories in the little spot called home."

Theirs was a tragedy that has been repeated over and over again many times in the strange history of mankind. Fair, intelligent, believing women, by some strange turn of misfortune have found themselves married to disagreeable, good-for-nothing, drunken sots. It is one of life's most staggering problems. Marriage, founded for mutual help and affection, becomes degraded and distorted until it is an ever-flowing fountain of misery and sorrow and death. To be true to life and true to the facts of life we must recognize this truth. That is why this story is in the book from which I read it. But I am glad that the book contains more than just this story. I am glad that from this tragedy on the hills of Maon where this highly gifted and beautiful woman was disappointed in the highest expectation of life because her marriage turned out to be nothing but degrading slavery to a son of Belial, we can turn to other examples where the marriage was all it was intended to be. For our encouragement there is the beautiful and romantic story of Isaac and Rebekah, of Jacob and Rachel, and of Ruth and Boaz.

Rebekah, Rachel, or Ruth never found their husbands on a drunken spree. Isaac, Jacob, and Boaz were not sons of Belial. They were not sodden reprobates. They died, not in a drunken party spree like Nabal, but in a good, ripe old age.

I have brought this message to you on this broadcast about beauty and the beast because I know that some of your homes are just as this home of Nabal and Abigail. Some of you husbands listening to me right now were sons of good mothers and fathers. You have good names in your communities and you are civic leaders. You have material holdings and can pay the bills and furnish your wife with clothes and a car and other things of this life, but there is no real peace, there is no real joy in your home. Your wild parties and your

"That Is Impossible"

"Here is a story that we all would do well to lay to heart. It has been told before, but will bear repetition. A farmer's wife had spread a slanderous story about her pastor through the village, and soon the whole countryside had heard it. Some time later the woman became sick and confessed the story was untrue. After her recovery she came to the pastor and craved his pardon. The old pastor said, 'Of course I will gladly pardon you if you will comply with a wish of mine.' 'Gladly,' replied the woman. 'Go home, kill a black hen, pluck the feathers, and put them into a basket and bring them here.'

"In half an hour she was back. 'Now,' said the pastor, 'go through the village and at each street corner scatter a few of these feathers, the remaining ones take to the top of the bell tower and scatter them to the winds, then return.' She did so. 'Now go through the village and gather the feathers again, and see that not one is missing.'

"The woman looked at the pastor in astonishment and said, 'Why, that is impossible! The wind has scattered them over the fields everywhere!'

"And so," said he, "while I forgive you gladly, do not forget that you can never undo the damage your untrue words have done."

—Berean Baptist News
G. R., Michigan.

Shut-In Would Enjoy Hearing From Other Christians

Quoted below is part of a letter received in *The Sword of the Lord* office April 22:

"... My grandmother is eighty and has been bedfast for over a year. She fell last April 2 and broke her right arm. She was a very active woman and so gets pretty lonesome.

"I don't know whether you do this or not, but I was wondering if Christian friends who read your paper would like to write letters to a shut-in. Grandmother could not answer because she cannot use her right hand, but she enjoys mail so much.

"Perhaps so many ask this favor that it is impossible to do and so I'll understand if you can't."

The name and address of the grandmother is: Mrs. Aaron Beaver, c/o Elias Stratton, Oto, Iowa.

drinking habits have wrecked the devotion between you. You have threatened a thousand times to separate from each other. Your home is a hell. It is only four walls which form a matrimonial prison. And you can trace that wretched condition straight back to the liquor bottle. You were once happy and peaceful until drink placed its tentacles about your home. You had better break with your wild companions and not stand so high in the community but be happy with your wife and babies. You had better not live in as expensive a house or ride in as expensive a car but be happy with your family. Abigail could not change Nabal. But Nabal could have changed himself. Your wife and your babies can't change you. But you can change yourself by forsaking drink and being a man. Did you ever hear that little poem by Edgar A. Guest, entitled, "HOME"? I am going to pass it on to you in conclusion:

"There is no rich reward of fame That can compare with this: At home I wear an honest name, My lips are fit to kiss. At home I'm always brave and strong,

And with the setting sun They find no trace of shame or wrong In anything I've done.

"There shine the eyes that only see The good I've tried to do; They think me what I'd like to be; They know that I am true. And whether I have lost my fight Or whether I have won, I find a faith that I've been right As soon as day is done."

Rejoice With Angels!

BY FAIRY SHAPPARD

"There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth" (Luke 15:10). We know that your heart is glad, too, when sinners are saved; so we tell you of some recent happy conversions that you may rejoice with the angels and praise God with us. These are conversions which have been reported to us through the mail within the last month and about which we have not been able to tell you before.

Many Continue To Be Saved Through Booklet, "What Must I Do To Be Saved?"

Rev. Theodore H. Epp sent us the other day the names of six who had trusted Christ through *What Must I Do To Be Saved?* and one through the booklet on Hell. He also sent the names of two who had sent in one-year subscriptions to *The Sword of the Lord*.

The following letter was received April 24:

"Dear Brother Rice:
"Your booklet, *What Must I Do To Be Saved?* has changed my heart and mind. It has been a book of pure gold. I am convinced by reading your book where I have wasted many precious years. Now Mrs. H— and I are going to live for Jesus.
"May God bless you and your good work.
"Your brother in Christ,
(Signed) L— N. D—
Glendive, Montana.

Enclosed with the letter were two signed decision slips from the booklet, *What Must I Do To Be Saved?*

We have heard from four others saved through this same booklet within the month, a woman from Clarksville, Iowa; a man in Porter, Minnesota; a man from Beatrice, Nebraska; a woman from Hillsdale, Indiana.

Three More Saved Through Heaven Booklet

God is continuing to wonderfully bless the booklet, *Bible Facts About Heaven*. It has been necessary to print 45,000 copies of this booklet since last September, and the printer is now busy on a new printing of 20,000. The ministry of the booklet is unique and blessed. It is a comfort and blessing to the bereaved; its clear, literal explanation of the Scriptures concerning Heaven is a wonderful revelation; and it is causing sinners to turn to the Saviour and be saved. We have heard from nearly thirty who have trusted Christ for salvation as a result of reading it. Three have written us within the last few days saying that they were saved through the message; a woman from Stillwater, Oklahoma; a man from Williamson School, Pennsylvania; and a woman in Nicholson, Pennsylvania.

Saved Through Radio Broadcasts

In other issues of the paper you have read how God saved many during the four weeks Dr. Rice was with Rev. Theodore H. Epp and *The Back to the Bible Broadcast*, Grand Island, Nebraska, in February. This week we heard of another saved through the broadcast. The letter was from Mrs. R. O—, Platte City, Missouri, and said in part:

"... I also want you to know that my husband was saved during the last few days of your broadcast at Grand Island. And our home life has been so different since... My father-in-law who is here with us now says he gave himself to Jesus Monday night."

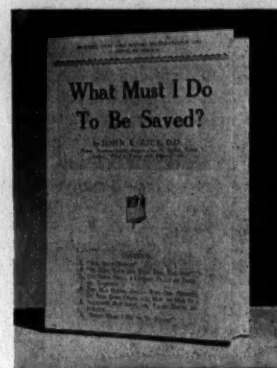
Word also came a few days ago from a woman who was saved while Dr. Rice was on *The Morning Cheer Broadcast*, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, for two weeks recently. The new convert was Miss C— M. B—, Red Lion, Pennsylvania. Miss B— told how she had been blessed by the booklet on Heaven, subscribed for *The Sword of the Lord* for a year and told of her conversion. One sentence of the letter said, "I accepted Christ as my Saviour March 29, Philadelphia Morning Cheer."

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JOHN R. RICE

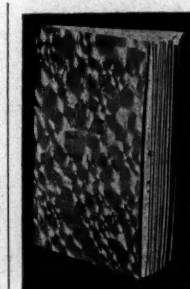
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Christ's Second Coming

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE)

honor; it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body; it is raised a *spiritual body* (I Cor. 15:35-44, R.V.).

"Our citizenship is in heaven; from whence also we wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of his glory" (Phil. 3:20, R.V.).

Q.—Will the saints be judged and rewarded when Christ comes again?

A.—"For we (believers) must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (II Cor. 5:10).

"Behold I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give each man as his work is" (Rev. 22:12, R.V.).

Q.—How does the Bible describe the condition of things on earth after the saints have been caught up to meet the Lord at His coming?

A.—"For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should be no flesh saved; but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened" (Matt. 24:21, 22).

"For the day of the Lord of Hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty. . . . and he shall be brought low. And the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day. . . . And they shall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth" (Isa. 2:12, 17, 19).

"Alas, for the day is great, so that none is like it; it is even the day of Jacob's (Jew's) trouble, but he shall be saved out of it" (Jer. 30:7).

Q.—What do the Scriptures teach as to the salvation and restoration of God's own people Israel, when Christ comes again?

A.—"I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications; and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn" (Zech. 12:10 — Israel's repentance).

"For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved; as it is written. There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away the ungodliness from Jacob" (Rom. 11:25, 26—Israel's salvation).

"Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that they shall no more say, The Lord liveth, which brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; but, the Lord liveth, which brought up and which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all the countries whither I have driven them: and they shall dwell in their own land" (Jer. 23:7, 8—Israel's restoration).

Q.—Does the Bible indicate, as scholars think, that Christ's coming will be in two stages, first coming for His saints, called "The Rapture," then after a time coming with His saints to the earth, called "The Revelation"?

A.—"Then we which are alive and remain (on earth when Christ comes again) shall be caught up together with them (resurrected saints) in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air" (I Thess. 4:17—The Rapture).

"The Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with Thee" (Zech. 14:5).

"Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds, which they have ungodly committed, and of all the hard speeches

which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him" (Jude 14:15 — The Revelation).

Q.—Do the Scriptures teach when Christ is coming back again?

A.—"But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father" (Mark 13:32).

"Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh" (Matt. 25:13).

Q.—What are some of the signs given in the New Testament indicating that Christ's coming might be near at hand, as the Bible scholars claim?

A.—"Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of demons" (I Tim. 4:1).

"But know this also, that in the last days grievous times shall come, for men shall be lovers of self, lovers of money. . . . lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God; holding a form of godliness, but having denied the power thereof, from such turn away" (II Tim. 3:1-5, R.V.).

"There shall be signs upon the earth: distress of nations with perplexity. . . . men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth. . . . Then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory, and when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption (complete salvation) draweth nigh" (Luke 21:25-28).

Q.—In view of Christ's second coming, what should be the true Christian's attitude?

A.—"Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man" (Luke 21:36).

"Therefore be ye also ready, for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh" (Matt. 24:44).

"Teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present world (age), looking for the blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" (Titus 2:12, 13).

Q.—Should the thought of Christ's second coming cause the Christian to live in constant fear or in joyful expectation?

A.—"Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but to them also that love his appearing" (II Tim. 4:8).

"Unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time, apart from sin unto (complete) salvation" (Heb. 9:28).

Q.—What does the Bible teach regarding the world's kingdoms and rulers when Christ comes again to rule upon this earth?

A.—"In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed. . . . It shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever" (Dan. 2:44).

"Yea, all kings shall fall down before him, and all nations shall serve him" (Psa. 72:11).

"The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ" (Rev. 11:15).

Q.—What are some characteristics of Christ's future kingly rule on earth?

A.—"A king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment" (Isa. 32:1).

"He shall judge the people with righteousness, and the poor with justice. The mountains shall bring peace to the people, and the little hills by righteousness" (Psa. 72:2, 3).

"In his days shall the righteous flourish, and abundance of peace as long as the moon endureth. . . . He shall deliver the needy when he crieth; the poor also, and him that hath no helper" (Psa. 72:7, 12).

Q.—Who are to be associated with Christ in His future reign on earth?

A.—"To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me on my throne" (Rev. 3:21).

"Thou wast slain, and hast re-

deemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth" (Rev. 5:9, 10).

"If children, then heirs; heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ, if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together" (Rom. 8:17).

Q.—How should all true Christians live and work in expectation of Christ's coming?

A.—"Let us consider one another to provoke unto love and good works; not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another; and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching" (Heb. 10:24, 25).

"If any man come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever shall save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake shall find it. For what is a man profited, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then shall he reward every man according to his works" (Matt. 16:24-27).

"Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory" (Col. 3:2-4).

"Rejoice in the Lord alway, and again I say, Rejoice. Let your moderation be known unto all men; the Lord is at hand" (Phil. 4:4, 5).

Q.—The apostles and early Christian church were looking for Christ's coming in their day. Why has it been so long delayed?

A.—"But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one

day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise (to return to earth), as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (II Pet. 3:8, 9).

"Despise not the riches of his goodness and forbearance and long-suffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance" (Rom. 2:4).

Q.—Will those be saved who have rejected Christ in the present age? Will they have another opportunity when Christ comes again?

A.—"The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance of them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power" (II Thess. 1:7-9).

Q.—In view of the sure coming of Christ, and the passing away of the present order of our world, are we taught to look forward for better things in the future age?

A.—"The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness. Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens, being on fire, shall be dissolved. . . . But we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness" (II Pet. 3:10-13).

"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and first earth were passed away. . . . And I, John, saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming

down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things have passed away. And he that sat on the throne said, Behold, I make all things new" (Rev. 21:1-5).

Looking For His Coming

"His coming will be visible, corporeal, local; and whenever we open the New Testament we find it thrilling to the heart with joy of that manifestation of the Lord when we shall see Him as He is!"

— Sir Robertson Nicoll.

"There is nothing left for the faithful but with wakeful mind to be always intent on His second coming." — John Calvin.

"I awaken, and I hear the birds twittering, twittering, and I expect to hear the trumpet break in upon their song." — Andrew Bonar.

"Perhaps He will appear as the dayspring from on high. Oh, do not set a time; expect Him every hour. Now He is nigh, even at the door."

— John Wesley.

"We wait for the Lord our Beloved, Our Comforter, Master and Friend, The substance of all that we hope for, Beginning of faith and its end; We watch for our Saviour and Bridegroom, Who loved us and made us His own."

For Him we are looking and longing;

For Jesus and Jesus alone."

— Annie Johnson Flint.

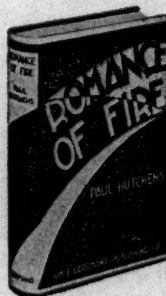
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